

P 171210Z JUL 09  
FM AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5219  
INFO AMEMBASSY BAMAKO PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY NIAMEY PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY  
CDR USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE PRIORITY  
SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

S E C R E T OUAGADOUGOU 000574

NOFORN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/17/2019  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PMIL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [UV](#)  
SUBJECT: (S) ALTERNATE PARKING FOR USG AIRCRAFT IN BURKINA  
FASO

REF: OUAGADOUGOU 0506

Classified By: Classified by Samuel C. Laeuchli, Charge d, Affaires,  
for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (S/NF) Summary. Burkina Faso,s Minister of Defense has indicated his support for U.S. aircraft to remain at the airbase in Ouagadougou in an area slightly removed from their present location. This would meet Burkina Faso,s objectives to maintain discretion concerning the American presence while at the same time permitting a more effective use of the base by both U.S. and Burkinabe aircraft. End Summary.

¶2. (S/NF) During a one-on-one meeting July 16th, Burkina Faso,s Minister of Defense, Yero Boly, told Charge that he was pleased the United States had responded quickly to his request as stated in reftel to find a more appropriate parking area for the U.S. aircraft at the airbase in Ouagadougou. He was particularly eager for a team to come down from the Africa Command to discuss specific issues. The Minister said that he had designated a point of contact who would serve as a liaison for the team.

¶3. (S/NF) According to Boly, the present location of the aircraft was in retrospect not an ideal choice in that it put the U.S. aircraft in a section of the airfield that already had too much traffic. The problem is not, he insisted, the presence of the aircraft themselves. He also commented that U.S. personnel were extremely discreet and did not attract undue attention.

¶4. (S/NF) Boly proposed a specific area near the present location to station our aircraft. He expressed a preference that they be housed in temporary hangars similar to what is being used now, because that would be discreet, clean and easiest to protect. Charge explained that there was little chance of building anything permanent because the United States does not in any way want to give the impression of "building a base." Nor, he added, did we want to draw attention to the aircraft so as not to increase the risk of terrorist attacks. Boly replied that this fit in well with Burkina Faso,s thinking as well.

¶5. (S/NF) At the end of the discussion Charge reminded Boly that the Minister had also suggested the possibility of transferring the aircraft to Bobo Dioulasso (about 220 miles away) during the previous conversation. Boly replied that Bobo was a good airport, but has very little traffic, and the U.S. planes and personnel would likely draw greater attention there. However, he said that on a short term or emergency basis, the U.S. could use Bobo Dioulasso, although it was neither a long-term solution nor a substitute for the base in Ouagadougou.

¶6. (S/NF) Comment. We believe that on this issue Boly speaks for President Compaore. The bottom line appears to be that we need to move the planes to a different section of the

airfield. It may take some effort and funding on our part to make this happen, but we will need to do so to continue unfettered access. If we do respond positively to the Minister,s (and the President,s) request, then Burkina Faso is likely to remain a willing host for the aircraft.

LAEUCHLI